

THE SPIRITUAL ISSUES OF THE WAR

OBJECTS:

1. *To provide for readers at home and abroad information concerning the life and thought of the British Churches in wartime.*
2. *To elucidate by news and quotations the spiritual issues at stake in the war.*

Number 183

MAY 6th, 1943

THE TRUE MEANING OF EMPIRE

The Bishop of Exeter, writing in his Diocesan Leaflet for May, 1943, gives some reflections on the modern significance of the idea of Empire in view of the approach of Empire Day (May 24th). We think our readers may be glad to see some extracts from this article. After stating that there is "all too little time to proclaim the great truths about God and Man and sin and the forgiveness of sins," the Bishop says that the past history and the present and future responsibilities of the British Empire may be suitable subjects for "careful instruction to our congregations."

"As I write," says the Bishop, "our young men are laying down their lives to preserve for us that which we have inherited from the past. It is worth preserving. It is worth living for."

"In the old days the dominant thought of Empire was *Power over*. Of late, and very gradually, we have come to realise humbly that the true note of Empire is *Power for*. Recently the British Government stated: 'It is the mission of Great Britain to work continuously for the training and education of the African towards a higher intellectual, moral and economic level.' Only a few months ago, the British Treasury, in the midst of a war for survival, devoted a sum of £50,000,000 to aid the development of colonial territories that they might improve their agriculture, their health services and their housing. Two years ago the Headmaster of a great English School left to become Principal of an East African College. A year ago the little colony of Sierra Leone sent to the British Government a gift of money 'in grateful recognition of the great benefits which Sierra Leone has received during the last 135 years under the

British flag.' These are significant facts: *Power over* is giving place to *Power for*. . . .

"The British Empire was never planned. It is a growth. It has grown from many roots. One of those roots was Religion. Massachusetts, Maryland, Pennsylvania, once colonies, owed their foundation to the emigration of religious congregations seeking in the sixteenth century to escape from the pressure of State religion. In the nineteenth century Church of England settlements gave birth to what is now New Zealand. Other roots were our native love of adventure and trade. The explorer, the missionary, the trader have had more to do with its growth than the soldier. As in all growth, there have been tares among the wheat. But the harvest has ripened. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa were quite free to be neutral in 1939. They are fighting by our side. For the second time within a quarter of a century our enemies were disappointed. They could not see the links which held the 'ramshackle empire' together. There are no visible links. The things which are unseen have once more proved that they are stronger than the things that are seen. That is the power of growth. Roots are better than plans. . . .

"Listen to what General Smuts has said of the British Commonwealth of Nations (that is the better and true title): 'It is the widest system of human freedom which has ever existed in history. It is the one firm structure from which the problems of the world can be tackled.' That is the testimony of one who, once an enemy, has become our most trusted Elder Statesman. No one can reflect upon the past history, the slow growth, the preservation (not without

BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES

An Agency of the British Government

30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, N. Y.

some loss) of this Commonwealth of Nations without seeing in it a mighty instrument which God may use as leader of the United Nations to heal a world in ruins. If we dare to use the word 'a chosen people,' all boasting will be excluded if we remember that in the language of true religion 'chosen' means chosen for service, perhaps for suffering, never for favouritism. Let us therefore thank God for the new opportunity He is giving to our Nation and Empire, remembering always that it comes to us marked with the life-blood of the young men not of Great Britain only, but of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India."

GERMAN BOOK CENSORSHIP AT WORK

A measure is announced by the *Deutsches Bücherblatt*, the organ of the Reich Chamber of Literature, which shows how the German authorities are utilising the shortage of book materials to control the expression of opinion in Germany. "The German publishing industry" says the paper "will shortly have to submit to further curtailments of its activities." A number of publishing firms will be closed down altogether, furthermore the number of books to be published will be radically reduced. The reason given is that if the available quantities of paper were divided among publishers according to the same schedule as hitherto, the editions would be too small to make publishing a paying proposition. The authorities have decided instead to allow preferably the republication of certain classics and the publication of a number of modern works in editions of 50,000 to 100,000 copies each. Obviously the choice would be made according to political considerations. The *Deutsches Bücherblatt* admits the harshness of this measure for those publishers who are adversely affected by it, but it adds that "aloofness, intentional blindness and inability to understand the political trends of the moment make it seem questionable whether certain works should be reprinted during the war, so that the paper shortage has made seasonable a step which the National-Socialist authorities have thought desirable for some time past."

SCARCITY OF PRO-NAZI CLERGYMEN IN NORWAY

The Quisling church authorities are so short of Nazi clergymen that they have announced that persons without any theologi-

cal education may "provisionally" officiate in churches, which means that laymen may in future be authorised to officiate at funerals, baptisms and Holy Communion.

This step has been taken in an attempt to solve the dilemma in which the Quisling church authorities find themselves as a result of the firm attitude of the Norwegian clergy. The dilemma is revealed in a circular from the "Ministry for Church Affairs" to local Nazi leaders, dated March 5th, which fell into the hands of Norwegian patriots.

The circular says: "The Ministry will do everything it can to appoint loyal (i.e., Quisling) clergymen to all parishes. In a number of cases, however, it will be necessary to have two, three or even more parishes run by the same clergyman.

"Taking everything into consideration, it will serve the interests of the Party best if one ignores them (anti-Nazi clergymen) as much as possible. Experience has shown that it is often more injurious to the Party to interfere than simply to ignore them."

The circular continues: "By inconsiderate propaganda the Church opposition has succeeded in frightening religious circles into believing that Nasjonal Samling's assumption of power has endangered Christianity in this country, so it is highly important to give the great mass of the people the chance to calm down. Church problems must therefore during this period be handled with the greatest possible care and tolerance. That is also why the Ministry for Church Affairs has not intervened in a number of cases when the clergymen on strike have misused the Church for anti-State propaganda."

After promising that the Ministry will appoint "loyal" clergymen "as the chance occurs," the circular reads: "It is more important to support the loyal clergymen and attend their services than to interfere with the disloyal clergymen. It is more important to consider the loyal churchgoers in the disloyally-served parishes than to remove disloyal clergymen from their posts and districts without having loyal clergymen to put in their place. To do this would only give the opposition another chance to assert that Nasjonal Samling and the Government are preventing the clergy from preaching God's Word."

BISHOP OF UGANDA VISITS AFRICAN TROOPS IN EGYPT

The Bishop of Uganda (the Right Rev. C. E. Stuart), in the *Church Missionary Outlook* for May, 1943, gives an account of

a visit paid last year to African troops on service in Egypt. We give extracts from this article, which throws an encouraging light on relations between European and African in the setting of the Christian Church.

"I went by air to Cairo, and as we stopped at Khartoum on a Sunday night I had the great privilege of preaching in Khartoum Cathedral that night. I was nearly seven weeks in Egypt, during which I confirmed thirty-nine times; the candidates were almost 1,200 African soldiers. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I got there just as the Germans were pushing us back, which prevented me from seeing some of the places I would have liked to see, but possibly enabled me to be of more use than otherwise. I was very cheered on the religious side. It filled me with great joy to remember that these men had been brought up in C.M.S. Missions, and that in all the strangeness and beastliness of war they really were holding on to their religion. All else was difficult, but God was real. Nearly all of them have their Bibles and Prayer Books—no light matter for a soldier—and they meet in little groups each night for prayer. Five African clergy are with them, and two Europeans; but they also have their own chosen church leaders in every unit (they are often very split up).

"In one camp where I was for ten days I had a Holy Communion service every morning at 5.30, and usually from 100 to 150 were there out of an available 300, and there is no doubt that these services meant much to them. . . .

"The troops everywhere had a wonderful welcome for me because I came from East Africa. Of course, the Baganda were most pleased, for many of them knew me and I could talk to them about their homes; but the troops from Kenya, Tanganyika, etc., and also the Roman Catholics, Moslems, and pagans all gave me a great welcome. The Baganda and Ateso in Tobruk when they heard I was coming collected 68s. to give me as a personal present. They guarded it carefully all through the retreat, and when at length I found them near Alexandria they gave it to me. (With their consent, I handed it on to the clergy fund in Uganda.) In another place the Baganda asked to see me alone, and after we had had much talk, one of them got up and said that it was, as I knew, their custom to give a visitor a present, but as it was not possible to get eggs or chicken in the desert, they had collected their cents to buy a bottle of lemon

squash—a most welcome gift! Everywhere they flocked round me, and I collected a number of names and addresses of their friends and relatives to write to on my return.

"Most of the time I went round in Unwin's desert truck, but for a short time when at the base I was lent a staff car with a British driver. This man said to me one day: "You know, sir, I've never known much about missions and I've known much about Africans; I always thought them surly. But I do like to see the way their faces light up when they see their padres."

VATICAN BROADCAST ON THE LIMITS OF STATE AUTHORITY

The following talk was broadcast in English from *Radio Vatican* on April 20th:—

Professor Gonelli, in a recent article entitled "The Inter-relation of Divine, Natural and Positive Law," dealt with the points in the Pope's address in which he recalled the impossibility of restoring a juridical order unless it was founded on a more stable basis than that offered by the State's will and appealed for the awakening of a desire for an order resting on the supreme dominion of God and safeguarded from all human failings.

The Christian concept of law rests on three clear principles:

The eternal law is that which God has imposed on the world—the "*ratio gubernativa totius mundi*," as St. Thomas calls it—by which men and things are kept in touch with the order set by God's mind.

The natural law in man is a participation in the Divine Law, as manifested in man's conscience. This can easily be expressed in the formula "Right must be done, wrong must be avoided."

Human Law is the term applied to positive declarations made by men.

There are, then, three laws, one subordinate to the other, thus in order of merit: Divine Law, Natural Law, Human Law. God is the ultimate source of all law, because God is the author of nature.

"All power," says St. John Chrysostom, "comes from God." In other words, all legitimately constituted authority is, in the last analysis, a participation in God's authority. This, therefore, means that man is freed from arbitrary exploitation and tyranny and, ultimately, that man's authority over man is exercised in the name of God. The assertion also means that the

freedom of the ruler is not unlimited. He cannot do as he likes with his power, because the authority which he holds is not his. And so the phrase, "All authority comes from God" also means all liberty comes from God.

If the authority of God and His Law are denied, the State does not become a promoter of human liberty; on the contrary, it usurps the omnipotence of God to enslave men's consciences. Once the authority of God and His Law are denied in this way, the civil authority, as an inevitable result, tends to attribute to itself an absolute autonomy which belongs exclusively to the Supreme Maker. It puts itself in the place of the Almighty and elevates the State into the last end of man, the supreme criterion of moral and juridical order, and, therefore, forbids every appeal to the principles of natural reason and the Christian conscience.

In international relations to-day it is only by building on the basis of Natural Law that we can attain that harmony which comes from respecting the rights of every nation against the arbitrary rights of one.

GENEROUS GIVING IN BRITISH CHURCHES

The Christian World for April 29th is devoted to news about plans for Congregational reconstruction. The Congregational Union is endeavouring to raise £500,000 towards the reconstruction of their damaged buildings, and the general rehabilitation of the work after the war. *The Christian World* reports that in the first year of the scheme £100,000 has actually been contributed to the fund. The Chief Commissioner of the fund, Mr. Alec Glassey, states, "This is not an estimate of contributions; it is a hard fact."

The Christian World also reports good news from the London Missionary Society. It states that the financial year of this important Free Church Society has ended with an excess of income over expenditure of over £20,000. There is an increase of £12,000 in the contributions which have come in from the British Isles.

The Church of Scotland reports encouraging financial results in the past financial year. There is an increase of £100,000 in

the total gifts which have come in from parishes and other sources.

The Baptist Missionary Society reports a particularly encouraging year. There is an increase of £5,000 in the income of the Society received from the churches, and this is in addition to a special fund in commemoration of the 150th anniversary, for which £100,000 has been contributed.

The Church Missionary Society is able to announce that gifts during the past year exceeded those of the previous year by over £50,000.

Information such as this shows that the British Churches are maintaining their sense of responsibility for Christian causes, in spite of the many claims and problems of war-time.

CANADIAN PRIMATE'S VISIT TO BRITAIN

Archbishop Owen, Archbishop of Toronto and Primate of all Canada, has lately concluded a visit of six weeks to the Canadian Forces in this country. His time was spent almost entirely with the Canadian Army and Air Force, so that he was unable to do very much in a wider field. Speaking to representatives of the Press in London before leaving, the Archbishop said that he had two main intentions in his visit to Britain: (1) To bring to the Canadian Forces a greeting from Canada, and especially from the Anglican Communion there; and (2) to take back messages from the troops to their people in the Dominion. He hoped also to be able to interpret the atmosphere of Britain to the forthcoming General Senate of the Church of England in Canada, and tell them of his experiences with the Canadian Forces.

Archbishop Owen spoke highly of the Canadian chaplaincy services, which he thought were very well operated, and he had noted with approval how chaplains of different religious traditions were co-operating with each other in their work. He said that he had a very good impression of the way in which the Canadian troops had been received and welcomed by people in Britain. He looked forward to a strengthening of the ties which united Canada and Great Britain as a result of experiences in war-time.